

For Immediate Release  
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(Washington, D.C.) - Today, Congressman Albio Sires released the following statement in response to President Bush's veto of the State Children's Health Insurance Program:

"The success of the State Children's Health Insurance Program in the last 10 years is proof that our children need this insurance. It has become a dependable way for their parents to ensure they receive adequate health care. President Bush's veto of the SCHIP bill today crushes American parents' trust that our government can step in when they really need us.

"The SCHIP program was created to provide health care coverage for children in families that earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to afford private insurance. This bill did not change the program's eligibility requirements. It would, however, have provided insurance for an additional 3.3 million children that would otherwise be uninsured.

"The cost of private health insurance has gone up so much in recent years, it has made it increasingly difficult for many families to keep up. This bill includes those that simply can't pay; it does not create government-run health care. In New Jersey, this bill would have added an additional 100,000 children to the over 129,000 already covered by New Jersey's SCHIP called FamilyCare.

"President Bush has missed the opportunity to provide 10 million American children sensible health care that would save money in the long run. Instead, he has chosen to ignore many of his Republican colleagues in favor of his version of the bill that would fall \$14 billion short of what is needed to fund existing coverage for 6 million children."

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